What is claimed is:

1. A nonvolatile memory device comprising a control circuit and a nonvolatile memory circuit,

wherein said nonvolatile memory circuit includes a storage region for restriction information that restricts access to contents information,

wherein said restriction information includes access time limit information and access time stamp information,

wherein said control circuit performs an access decision operation which decides whether access to said contents information is enabled or disabled, based on first time information which is supplied externally and said restriction information, and updating said access time stamp information based on said first time information,

wherein said control circuit decides that access is disabled in the case where said first time information is later than the access time limit given by the access time limit information or in the case where said first time information is earlier than the access time stamp given by said access time stamp information, in the case other than these cases, said control circuit decides that the access is enabled, and

wherein said control circuit performs the access decision operation, at least, at the start of access to said contents information and at the end of the access.

2. A nonvolatile memory device comprising a control circuit and a nonvolatile memory circuit,

wherein said nonvolatile memory circuit includes a storage region for restriction information that restricts access to contents information,

wherein said restriction information includes access time limit information and access time stamp information,

wherein said control circuit performs an access decision operation which decides whether access to said contents information is enabled or disabled, based on first time information which is supplied externally and said restriction information, and updating said access time stamp information based on said first time information,

wherein said control circuit decides that access is disabled in the case where said first time information is later than the access time limit given by the access time limit information or in the case where said first time information is earlier than the access time stamp given by said access time stamp information, in the case other than these cases, said control circuit decides that the access is enabled, and

wherein said control circuit performs the access decision operation, at least, when operating power supply to the nonvolatile memory device is turned on and when the operating power supply is turned off.

3. The nonvolatile memory device according to claim 1,

wherein said nonvolatile memory circuit includes a storage region for said contents information and said nonvolatile memory device allows a plurality of divisions of said contents information to be stored in separate locations and to be accessed discretely, and

wherein, after said access decision operation decides that initial access to one of the divisions is enabled, said access decision operation may be performed each time accessing each of or a given number of the remaining divisions of said contents information.

4. The nonvolatile memory device according to claim 3, wherein the divisions of said contents information are accessed in units of sectors.

5. The nonvolatile memory device according to claim 3, wherein the access decision operation for access to the divisions of said contents information is programmed such that the access decision operation for access to the second and subsequent divisions of said contents information decides that access is enabled even when the first time information is later than the access time limit given by the access time limit information.

6. The nonvolatile memory device according to claim 3, wherein said nonvolatile memory device is used, coupled to an external device capable of outputting said first time information, and said nonvolatile memory device is capable of outputting the divisions of said contents information to said external device.

7. The nonvolatile memory device according to claim 3, wherein said nonvolatile memory circuit is a nonvolatile semiconductor memory and is housed in a certain memory card casing having interface terminals for connection to an external device.

8. The nonvolatile memory device according to claim 1, wherein said restriction information is encrypted by said control circuit and stored into said nonvolatile memory circuit.

9. The nonvolatile memory device according to claim 8, wherein an encryption key that is used to encrypt said restriction information is attribute information unique to the nonvolatile memory device.

10. The nonvolatile memory device according to claim 1, wherein said control circuit is capable of outputting certificate information to the external in order to receive a contents information license including a contents key that is used to decrypt said contents information.

11. The nonvolatile memory device according to claim 10, wherein said control circuit receives said contents information license from the external and stores said contents information license into said nonvolatile memory circuit.

12. The nonvolatile memory device according to claim 11, wherein said control circuit stores time information that is received with said contents key into said nonvolatile memory circuit as initial information of said access time stamp information.

13. The nonvolatile memory device according to claim 1,

wherein said nonvolatile memory circuit comprises a restricted access region and an unrestricted access region,

wherein said restriction information is stored into the restricted access region, and

wherein said contents information is stored into the unrestricted access region.

14. The nonvolatile memory device according to claim 13, wherein said control circuit is allowed to write data into said restricted access region only after authentication is accepted from the external.

15. The nonvolatile memory device according to claim 14, wherein said restricted access region is to store a contents information license.

16. The nonvolatile memory device according to claim 14, wherein said control circuit is allowed to read data from said restricted access region only after certificate information given from the external is authenticated.

17. A data processing system which comprises a playback unit and a usage restriction unit and is capable of play back of contents information through access to a rewritable storage medium which stores restriction information to restrict access to said contents information,

wherein said restriction information includes access time limit information and access time stamp information,

wherein said usage restriction unit performs an access decision operation which decides whether access to said contents information is enabled or disabled, based on first time information which is generated in the data processing system and said restriction information, and updating said access time stamp information which is retained on said storage medium based on said first time information,

wherein said usage restriction unit decides that access is disabled in the case where said first time information is

later than the access time limit given by the access time limit information or in the case where said first time information is earlier than the access time stamp given by said access time stamp information, and in the case other than these cases, said control circuit decides that the access is enabled, and

wherein said usage restriction unit performs the access decision operation, at least, at the start of access to said contents information and at the end of the access.

18. A data processing system which comprises a playback unit and a usage restriction unit and is capable of play back of contents information through access to a rewritable storage medium which stores restriction information to restrict access to said contents information,

wherein said restriction information includes access time limit information and access time stamp information,

wherein said usage restriction unit performs an access decision operation which decides whether access to said contents information is enabled or disabled, based on first time information which is generated in the data processing system and said restriction information, and updating said access time stamp information which is retained on said storage medium based on said first time information,

wherein said usage restriction unit decides that access is disabled in the case where said first time information is

later than the access time limit given by the access time limit information or in the case where said first time information is earlier than the access time stamp given by said access time stamp information, and in the case other than these cases, said control circuit decides that the access is enabled, and

wherein said usage restriction unit performs the access decision operation, at least, when the storage medium is installed in the playback unit and when the storage medium is removed from the playback unit.

19. The data processing system according to claim 18, wherein said usage restriction unit performs said access decision operation when operating power supply is turned on with the storage medium installed in the playback unit and when the operating power supply is turned off with the storage medium installed in the playback unit.

20. The data processing system according to claim 19, wherein said usage restriction unit encrypts the access time stamp information with an encryption key of attribute information unique to the storage medium and updates the access time stamp information.

21. The data processing system according to claim 19, wherein said storage medium is a rewritable nonvolatile memory device.

22. The data processing system according to claim 21,

wherein said nonvolatile memory device comprises a restricted access region and an unrestricted access region,

wherein said usage restriction unit accesses restriction information which is stored in the restricted access region, and

wherein said playback unit accesses contents information which is stored in the unrestricted access region.

23. The data processing system according to claim 22, wherein said usage restriction unit is allowed to write data into said restricted access region after certificate information given from the nonvolatile memory device is authenticated.

24. The data processing system according to claim 23, wherein said restricted access region is to store a contents information license that is used to decrypt said contents information.

25. The data processing system according to claim 24, wherein said usage restriction unit is allowed to read data from said restricted access region certificate information given to the nonvolatile memory device is authenticated.

26. The data processing system according to claim 19, further

comprising a host interface control circuit which can output certificate information retrieved from said storage medium to a host device in order to receive a contents information license including a contents key that is used to decrypt said contents information.

27. The data processing system according to claim 26, wherein said host interface control circuit receives said contents information license from the host device and is capable of storing said contents information license into said storage medium.

28. The data processing system according to claim 27, wherein said host interface control circuit is capable of storing time information that is received with said contents key into said storage medium as initial information of said access time stamp information.

29. A data processing system which comprises a host interface unit, a storage medium interface unit, and a data processing unit and stores certain information into a storage medium installed in the storage medium interface unit,

wherein said data processing unit outputs a request to deliver a decryption key and certificate information retrieved from the storage medium to the outside through the host

interface unit, receives information returned in response to the request through the host interface unit, and, based on the received information, stores the decryption key to decrypt contents information and restriction information to restrict access to the contents information as said certain information, into said storage medium through the storage medium interface unit,

wherein said restriction information includes access time limit information and access time stamp information,

wherein initial information of said access time stamp information is time information included in said received information,

wherein said certificate information comprises information indicating the storage medium with a particular feature,

wherein said storage medium with a particular feature comprises a control circuit and a nonvolatile memory circuit,

wherein said nonvolatile memory circuit includes a storage region for said restriction information,

wherein said control circuit performs an access decision operation which decides whether access to said contents information is enabled or disabled, based on first time information which is supplied externally and said restriction information, and updating said access time stamp information based on said first time information,

wherein said control circuit decides that access is disabled in the case where said first time information is later than the access time limit given by the access time limit information or in the case where said first time information is earlier than the access time stamp given by said access time stamp information, and in the case other than these cases, said control circuit decides that the access is enabled, and

wherein said control circuit performs the access decision operation, at least, at the start of access to said contents information and at the end of the access.

30. A data processing system which comprises a storage medium interface unit and a data processing unit and stores certain information into a storage medium installed in the storage medium interface unit,

wherein said data processing unit retrieves certificate information from the storage medium in response to a request to issue a decryption key, authenticates the storage medium, and stores the decryption key to decrypt contents information and restriction information to restrict access to the contents information as said certain information, into said storage medium through the storage medium interface unit,

wherein said restriction information includes access time limit information and access time stamp information,

wherein initial information of said access time stamp

information is time information relevant to the contents distribution,

wherein said certificate information comprises information indicating the storage medium with a particular feature,

wherein said storage medium with a particular feature comprises a control circuit and a nonvolatile memory circuit,

wherein said nonvolatile memory circuit includes a storage region for said restriction information,

wherein said control circuit performs an access decision operation which decides whether access to said contents information is enabled or disabled, based on first time information which is supplied externally and said restriction information, and updating said access time stamp information based on said first time information,

wherein said control circuit decides that access is disabled in the case where said first time information is later than the access time limit given by the access time limit information or in the case where said first time information is earlier than the access time stamp given by said access time stamp information, and in the case other than these cases, said control circuit decides that the access is enabled, and

wherein said control circuit performs the access decision operation, at least, at the start of access to said contents information and at the end of the access.